

Message Text

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PAGE 01 SEOUL 02961 121229Z
ACTION SS-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 /026 W
-----121231Z 035636 /12
O 120917Z APR 77
FM AMEMBASSY SEOUL
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 3216

C O N F I D E N T I A L SEOUL 2961

STADIS/////////
EXDIS
EO 11652: GDS
TAGS: OREP (WOLFF, LESTER)
SUJ: CODEL WOLFF: THE SALZBERG CONNECTIONS

1. HIS STAFF MEMBER AND SALZBERG SPENT HIGHLY ACTIVE TWO DAYS MEETING LARGELY WITH ANTI-GOVERNMENT FIGURES, INCLUDING MYONGDONG DEFENDENTS, DURING CODEL WOLFF VISIT. AS HE HAD INDICATED HE MIGHT PRIOR ARRIVAL, EXCEPT FOR INITIAL CODEL MEETING WITH AMBASSADOR, UNC BRIEFING, AND EMBASSY STAFF AND SMABASSADOR'S RECEPTION, SALZBERG SKIPPED ALL THE REGULARLY SCHEDULED EVENTS (CALL ON PRIME MINISTER, NATIONAL ASSEMBLY BRIEFING AND LUNCH WITH SPEAKER, PANMUNJOM TRIP, ETC). HE SAW INSTEAD TO OUR KNOWLEDGE, VARIETY OF ANTI-GOVERNMENT AMERICAN MISSIONARIES, CARDINAL KIM (WITH CONGRESSMAN WOLFF), MYONGDONG DEFENDENTS INCLUDING CHUNG IL-KYUNG AND MRS YI TAI YOUNG, AT AMBASSADOR'S RESIDENCE, MRS. KIM DAE JUNG, DUP LEADER YANG IL DONG, EX-NDP ASSEMBLY WOMAN KIM OCK SUN, YUN PO SUN (WITH CONGRESSWOMAN MEYNER) AND EHWA UNIVERSITY'S PRESIDENT KIM OK GIL AND LIBERAL ARTS SCHOOL DEAN HYUN. HE EXPRESSED NO INTEREST IN SEEING ROKG FIGURES UNTIL POLCOUNC ASKED HIM MORNING OF SECOND DAY WHETHER EMBASSY COULD HELP HIM WITH GOVERNMENT APPOINTMENTS, AN D HE THEN SAID HE WOULD SEE BLUE HOUSE SECRETARY KIM KYONG WON AT AMBASSADOR'S RECEPTION; HE DI IN FACT TALK TO KIM BRIEFLY AT RECEPTION AS WELL AS WITH SOME OTHER ASSEMBLED ROKG LEADERS.

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2. IN RESPONSE TO HIS TELEGRAPHIC REQUESTS PRIOR TO ARRIVAL, EMBASSY ARRANGED APPOINTMENTS FOR SALZBERG WITH AMERICAN MISSIONARIES, CARDINAL KIM, YANG IL DONG, AND KIM OCK SUN AND SEVERAL TIMES OFFERED TO ARRANGE APPOINTMENTS WITH ANYONE ELSE HE WISHED TO SEE EXCEPT UNIMPRISONED MYONGDONG DEFENDENTS. IN ABSENCE ANSWER FROM DEPARTMENT TO SEOUL 2875

QUERY ON THIS POINT, WHICH DID NOT ARRIVE UNTIL FEW HOURS BEFORE CODEL DEPARTURE, AMBASSADOR AND LATER POLCOUNS INFORMED SALZBERG WE ADVISED AGAINST MAKING APPOINTMENTS WITH UNIMPRISONED MYONGDONG DEFENDENTS, SINCE IN OUR VIEW IT COULD HAVE ADVERSE EFFECTS ON POSSIBILITIES OF CLEMENCY FOR THEIR IMPRISONED COLLEAGUES. HE WAS CAREFULLY BRIEFED ON DELICACY CURRENT SITUATION AND WAS OF COURSE ALSO TOLD HE WAS FREE TO PROCEED WITH MAKING APPOINTMENTS ON HIS OWN RESPONSIBILITY. SALZBERG SAID HE UNDERSTOOD THIS POSITION CLEARLY BUT DISAGREED WITH IT ON GROUNDS EMBASSY OBLIGATED TO ATTEMPT TO MAKE WHATEVER APPOINTMENTS REQUESTED. IN THE EVENT HE DID ARRANGE TO MAKE HIS OWN APPOINTMENTS WITH DEFENDENTS THROUGH AMERICAN MISSIONARIES AND ALSO WITH SOME OTHERS WHOM MISSIONARIES ADVISED HIM TO SEE.

3. IN COURSE ONE HOUR CONVERSATION WITH POLCOUNS IN WHICH SALZBERG DISPLAYED SUSPICIOUS AND CRITICAL ATTITUDE TOWARD EMBASSY ROLE IN HUMAN RIGHTS AREA, SALZBERG ALSO QUESTIONED WHY EMBASSY DID NOT ADVISE CODEL IN ADVANCE OF REQUESTS OF OPPOSITION LEADERS TO SEE CODEL. SALZBERG WAS TOLD AT THAT MEETING AND IN FOLLOW-UP CONVERSATION AFTER RECORDS CHECKED THAT NO REQUESTS TO SEE CODEL MEMBERS HAD IN FACT BEEN RECEIVED. IN FACT, EMBASSY RECEIVED ONLY ONE SUCH REQUEST BEFORE CODEL VISIT FROM MRS. KIM DAE JUNG BUT THIS WAS TO SEE RICHARD HOLBROOKE, NOT CODEL. YANG IL DONG ADVISED BEFOREHAND HE MIGHT DELIVER PETITION TO CODEL BUT REQUESTED TO HAND PETITION TO EMBOFF SINCE HE ANTICIPATED CODEL WOULD BE BUSY. EMBOFF RECEIVED TWO LETTERS BEFOREHAND FROM MRS. KIM DAE JUNG ADDRESSED TO MR. WRLFF AND MR. HOLBROOKE
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(SEPTTEL) AND THESE WERE DELIVERED.

4. EMBASSY OFFICERS OFFERED TO ACCOMPANY SALZBERG, PROVIDE INTERPRETING SERVICES, ETC. TO ALL MEETINGS, AS HE WISHED, BUT IN ACCORD SALZBERG DESIRES EMBOFFS ATTENDED ONLY YANG IL DONG AND KIM OK SUN MEETINGS. APART FROM EXPRESSIONS OF STANDARD OPPOSITION VIEWS, THESE SESSIONS NOTABLE FOR SERIES OF QUESTIONS FROM SALZBERG REGARDING EMBASSY'S CONTACTS WITH OPPOSITION, CREDIBILITY OF PRESIDENT CARTER'S HUMAN RIGHTS STAND AMONG OPPOSITION FIGURES, AND WHETHER OPPOSITION WAS SATISFIED WITH EMBASSY'S AND SPECIFICALLY AMBASSADOR'S ACTIVITIES IN HUMAN RIGHTS AREA. HIM OK SUN WAS CRITICAL ON LATER TWO POINTS BUT DID ACKNOWLEDGE SHE HAD DISCUSSED HUMAN RIGHTS WITH EMBASSY OFFICERS OFTEN. YANG WAS MORE NEUTRAL ON ALL POINTS. ONLY OTHER ACCOUNTS WE HAVE OF SALZBERG CONVERSATIONS WAS REPORT FROM KCIA OFFICIAL THAT YUN PO SUN TOLD SALZBERG NOT TO MAKE CONNECTION BETWEEN HUMAN RIGHTS AND SECURITY SITUATION.

5. AMBASSADOR AND HOLBROOKE HAD SUBSEQUENT CONVERSATION WITH SALZBERG, WHO THEN SEEMED REASONABLY SATISFIED WITH EMBASSY HANDLING OF HIS VISIT. WE HAVE ALSO HEARD FROM KCIA AND BLUE HOUSE SURCES THAT FACT EMBASSY DID NOT ARRANGE APPOINTMENT WITH MYONGDONG DEFENDENTS MITIGATED RISK OF ADVERSELY AFFECTING FUTURE TREATMENT OF DEFENDENTS.

6. ABOVE PROVIDED TO DEPARTMENT IN SOME DETAIL IN CASE THERE MAY BE INQUIRIES FROM CONGRESSMAN FRASER'S OFFICE.

7. FULL REPORT CODEL VISIT FOLLOWS SEPTTEL.
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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: Z
Capture Date: 01-Jan-1994 12:00:00 am
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: n/a
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Sent Date: 12-Apr-1977 12:00:00 am
Decaption Date: 22 May 2009
Decaption Note: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 22 May 2009
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1977SEOUL02961
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D770126-0637
Format: TEL
From: SEOUL
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Legacy Key: link1977/newtext/t19770465/aaaacesv.tel
Line Count: 128
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: 723dbda6-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION SS
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: EXDIS, STADIS
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: EXDIS, STADIS
Reference: n/a
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 16-Mar-2005 12:00:00 am
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 2831507
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: CODEL WOLFF: THE SALZBERG CONNECTIONS
TAGS: OREP, (WOLFF, LESTER)
To: STATE
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odb://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/723dbda6-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
22 May 2009
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 22 May 2009